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SUBJECT: Personnel Continuity

1. (C) BACKGROUND. Since its conception the unit now known as the Intelligence Systems Analysis Branch (ISAB) has been faced with a problem of personnel continuity. The problem is exacerbated by the two year time period it takes to train unit personnel to a point of operational utility. In a normal three year tour a person is trained for the first two years, operational for the third year, and then reassigned.

2. (U) FACTORS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM:

a. (U) "Homesteading" (spending five or more years at the same location) hinders promotion and selection for schools.

b. (U) Officers, Warrant Officers and NCOs assigned to ISAB must remain competitive with their peers for promotion and advanced schooling. While a three or four year tour may not be career damaging, a five or six year tour would have a negative effect on career progression, despite the fact that it might be of benefit to the government, in that the person affected would not have had those assignments (command and staff assignments), the primary concern of promotion boards.

c. (U) An initial four year assignment to the project with a subsequent reassignment and then return to the project has several advantages:

(1) The trained personnel who went back to the field to work their previous specialties would keep up on the current state-of-art in their fields and would bring their new skills and fresh ideas back to the project. An additional plus would be that they would return from their three year tour fresh, enthusiastic and ready to work. They would in all probability be operational with only a few weeks refresher training.

(2) A second advantage would be that there would be the establishment of a growing pool of trained, experienced personnel filling normal assignments in the greater military intelligence community instead of occupying the limited number of ISAB slots, but who would be readily available within a matter of months if the field should rapidly expand or a sudden development should require their expertise.

(3) A three year tour with a one year extension or an agreement with MILPERCEN, DA to assign personnel to the

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"Project" for a four year tour would not be career damaging for the personnel assigned and should be fairly simple to arrange.

3. (U) THE CIVILIAN OPTION. There would be a definite advantage in completely civilianizing the project. Employment of Department of Defense Civilians as a rule provides more manning stability for an organization than does use of their military counterparts. But there are also several disadvantages to this option:

(1) Civilians would need to make a career decision at the time they entered the program. It would be virtually impossible for a person to spend ten years in the program and then return to his former speciality. The state-of-the-art in his former field would simply have passed him by.

(2) At the present time, there are limited opportunities for career progression for civilians in the "Project." Realistically, GS-13 is probably the highest grade possible. Because of this, we may not be able to attract the highest caliber of people.

(3) A civilian spending an entire career in the ISAB at the same location would be highly specialized in this one area of expertise but would have very narrow exposure to the greater intelligence community or DoD.

(4) Spending an entire career in one place doing one thing almost guarantees the occurrence of "burn-out."

4. (C) THE GREAT SKILLS OPTION. One option that has been used successfully in the past for extending the tour length for military personnel is the use of the Great Skills program. This option however has several disadvantages:

a. This, in a sense, subverts the purpose for which Great Skills was originated. Personnel may be reluctant to join ISAB or be retained by ISAB because of this.

b. Great Skills does not guarantee a person will spend his entire career at the same location. What it does guarantee is that the person will spend his entire career in Great Skills.

c. Great Skills is a career decision. If a person spends five years in Great Skills and then goes back to the "regular" Army his career is for all purposes ruined. Because of this, we may not be able to recruit the best people if a decision to go Great Skills is a prerequisite for entry into the "Project".

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5. (C) SHORT TERM SOLUTION. The best solution for now appears to be to continue with a mix of civilians and military. The civilians would provide a measure of personnel continuity for the ISAB, while the military personnel would spend an initial four year tour with the project, return to the field for three years and then come back fresh to ISAB with new energy, experience, perspective, and perhaps ideas. There would always be a trained pool of personnel working their speciality outside the project who could be rapidly called back should an emergency arise or should the project expand. When these military personnel retired from the Army they would also provide a trained recruitment pool for ISAB civilian positions.

6. (C) LONG TERM SOLUTION. The long term solution will evolve naturally in time. Once the ISAB product is accepted by the intelligence community, additional offices can be designated at different geographical locations to provide service to customers. The European Command and The Pacific Command come to mind as logical locations for ISAB Field Offices. This will create additional command and staff positions for both civilians and military, as well as expanded opportunities for advancement, all of which would contribute to the recruitment and retention of the highest quality personnel. The next natural step is assigning ISAB Teams to the G2 Staffs of Army Corps and their sister service equivalents and eventually down to the G2 Staff at Division level, thereby providing both tactical and strategic exposure for the members of ISAB.

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Chief, ISAB

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